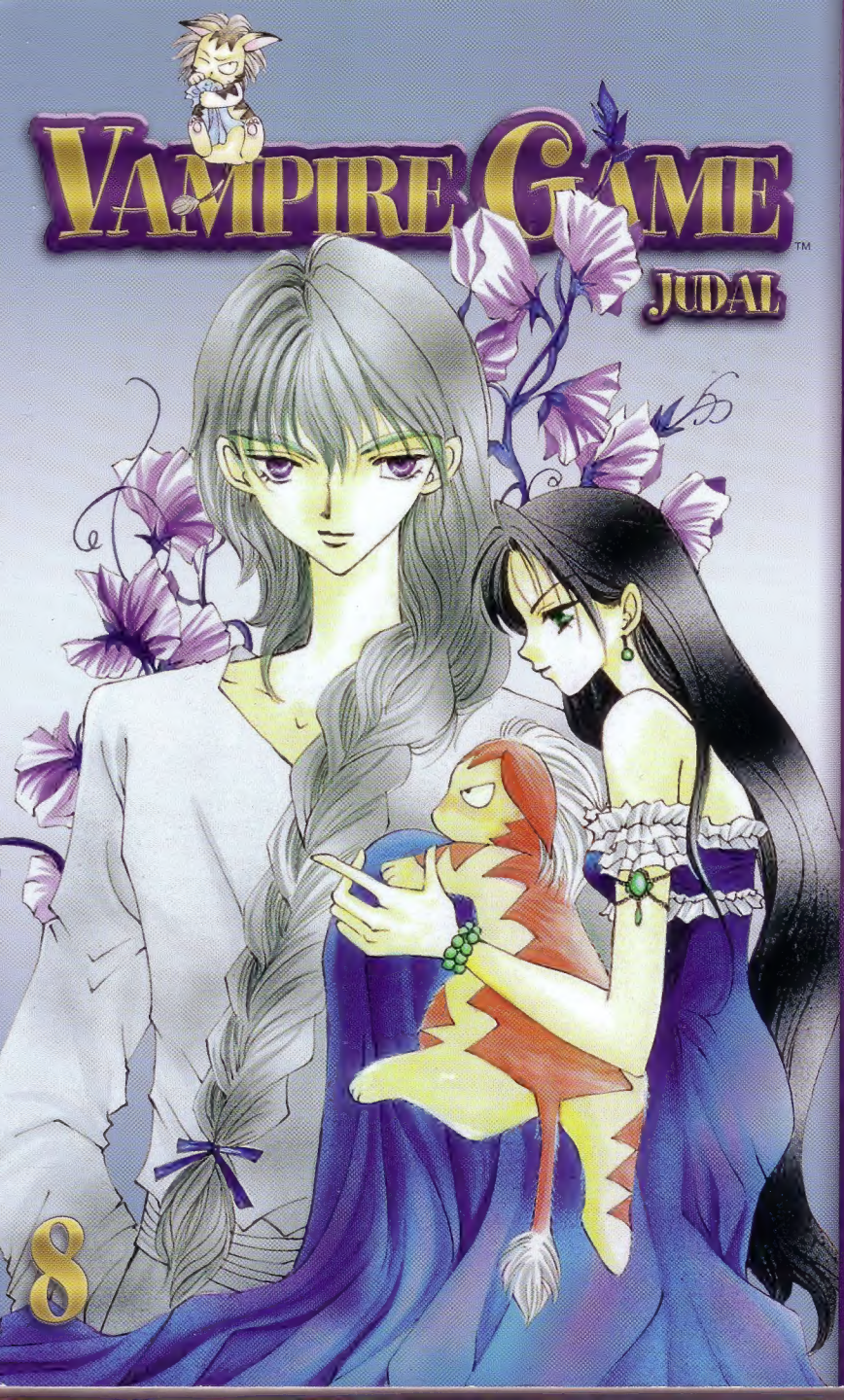
CatChan Scans
REMEMBER TO SUPPORT THE MANGAKA.
AND BY YOUR COPY TODAY!!
DO NOT SHARE OUTSIDE
OF IRC WITHOUT PERMISSION.



TOKYOPOP

VAMPIRE GAME

Volume 8

by

JUDAL

TOKYOPOP®

HAMBURG // LONDON // LOS ANGELES // TOKYO

VAMPIRE GAME

The Story Thus Far...

This is the tale of the Vampire King Duzell and his quest for revenge against the good King Phelios, a valiant warrior who slew the vampire a century ago. Now Duzell has returned, reincarnated as a feline foe to deliver woe to...well, that's the problem. Who is the reincarnation of King Phelios?

Sir Keld has informed Ishtar that her Aunt Sonia, the benevolent lady of Zi Alda, is dying. But when Ishtar, Duzell and Darres rush to be by her side, they find Lady Sonia in good health, her "fatal" illness little more than a head cold. Convinced this is more than a simple misunderstanding, Ishtar figures that Sir Keld is plotting again. After all, if she were to wed Sonia's son Yuujel, Keld would become part of the royal family.

However, Ishtar has no interest in marrying Yuujel. In fact, she flat-out despises him. Besides, there's the matter of finding Yuujel first, as the prince of Zi Alda has been notoriously MIA for the past few months, a fact that's perfectly fine with Ishtar. She has enough on her plate, what with Duzell's newfound ability to appear as his old self, her pending revenge against Keld, and the unwelcome attention of Lady Leene and her raven-haired sorceress, Diaage. Leene, you see, is in love with Yuujel (despite being married to his best friend) and she's positive that Yuujel has set his sights on Ishtar. Which in turn means that she must set her sights on her as well, and squeeze the trigger.

And what better way to do it than a morning ride? Especially when you've replaced the princess' horse with the untamed, unbroken and completely unpredictable Backbreaker. But the last laugh may be on Leene. After all, her beloved Yuujel has been spending quality time with Ishtar for well over a year now...as her magic instructor, Yujinn.

吸血遊戯
南領篇
(ゼ・アルダ)
Act.4

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ISHTAR AND LEENE...
TOGETHER...
YUUJEL, I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON...
...BUT IF PRINCESS ISHTAR-- AND WITH HER, YOUR CHANCES OF BECOMING OUR NEXT KING-- IS IN DANGER...
.....!
...THEN MOVE QUICKLY! INDULGE ME. ALLOW AN OLD MAN TO HELP YOU IN ANY WAY HE CAN.
コクン

YUUJEL, THAT'S WONDERFUL!
AHEM! I MEAN YUJINN. YES, I SAID YUJINN...
?
I'M GLAD YOU FINALLY SEE IT MY WAY!
OR RATHER, OUR WAY! WHY DON'T YOU BORROW ONE OF OUR LILKE RINGS? TELEPORTATION IS SO MUCH FASTER THAN RIDING.
.....
THANKS, BUT I THINK I PREFER TO RIDE.

THAT'S FUNNY....
WHO'S THE BRUNETTE?
LADY LEENE?
PRINCESS ISHTAR!

Zi
Alda
I'M SURE ASHLEY AND DARRES CAN HANDLE THEM UNTIL I GET THERE.
WHY DOESN'T THAT REASSURE ME?
ALONE, THEY'VE BEEN KNOWN TO INSPIRE TERROR IN EVEN THE BRAVEST OF SOULS, BUT TOGETHER...

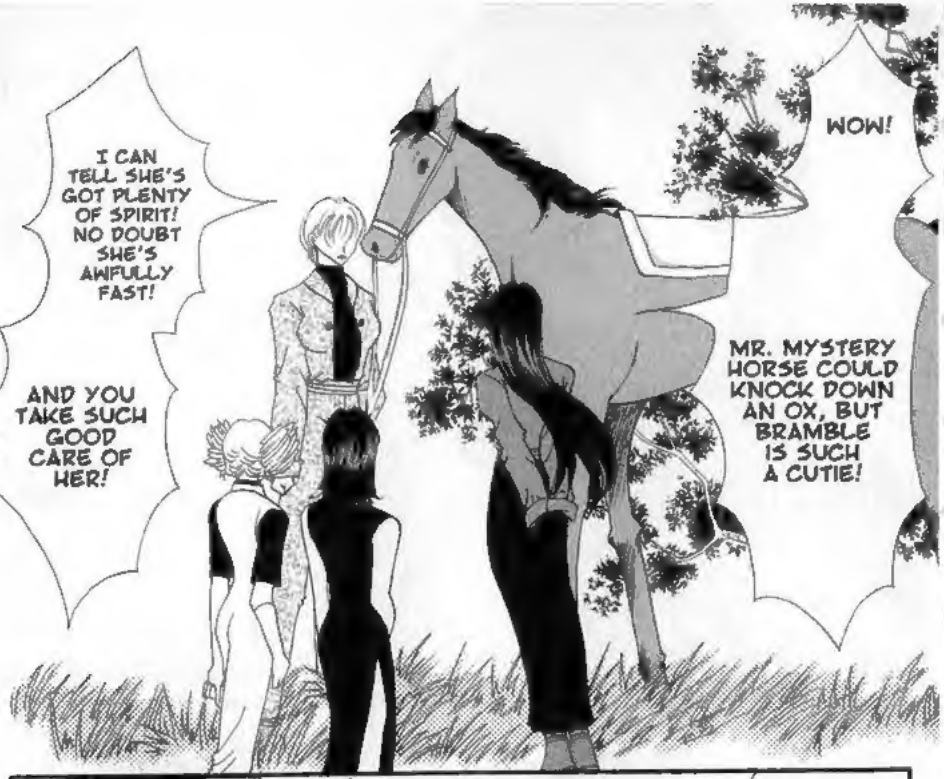
I DON'T KNOW WHAT HIS NAME IS, BUT HE'S WAY BIGGER AND STRONGER! I'LL BET IF HE WANTED TO, HE COULD SNAP ME LIKE A TWIG!
But you're not going to do that. Are you, Mr. Mystery Horse?
BUT AS FOR THE NAG...
...I DON'T THINK IT'LL BE A PROBLEM. THIS IS A DIFFERENT HORSE!
HOW DID YOU--?
!!
あせ。
YOUR MAJESTY...

SHE LOOKS FAMILIAR...
...LIKE I'VE SEEN HER SOMEWHERE BEFORE.
SO, PRINCESS...
...I HEAR YOU'RE QUITE THE RIDER!
TOO BAD YOU'LL BE STUCK SPURRING ON THAT OLD NAG. LADY SONIA SHOULD HAVE PUT HER OUT TO PASTURE YEARS AGO.
STILL, YOU'LL PROBABLY OUTRIDE ME. AFTER ALL, I'M USED TO RIDING... GOATS.
ポロ
YEAH... SORRY ABOUT THAT.

I'M NOT SURE WHOSE HORSE THIS IS, BUT I'D CONSIDER IT AN HONOR IF YOU'D RIDE MINE. HER NAME IS BRAMBLE, AND SHE'S ONE OF THE FASTEST IN ZI ALDA.

I'M LUCY, FROM THE GENERAL STAFF OFFICE.
.....
I'M TERRIBLY SORRY, BUT THE STABLEMASTER SEEMS TO HAVE MADE A MISTAKE.

LUCY! WHAT A SURPRISE...


WOW!
I CAN TELL SHE'S GOT PLENTY OF SPIRIT! NO DOUBT SHE'S AWFULLY FAST!
AND YOU TAKE SUCH GOOD CARE OF HER!
MR. MYSTERY HORSE COULD KNOCK DOWN AN OX, BUT BRAMBLE IS SUCH A CUTIE!

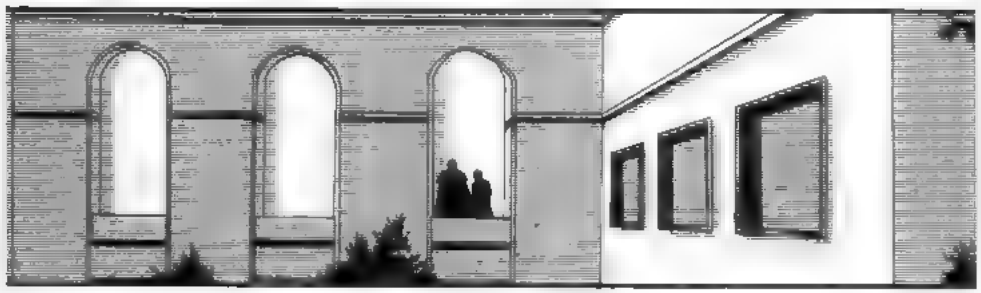
YOU'RE SO WELL GROOMED! SOMEONE MUST REALLY LOVE YOU, HUH?

I'VE GOT TO TRY HIM OUT!
HE HAS THE SAME EYES AS DUZIE

DON'T BOTHER.
I'M GOING TO RIDE HIM!
WELL, HAVE FUN! I'LL JUST TAKE THIS GUY BACK TO THE STABLES AND SEE IF I CAN FIGURE OUT WHO HE BELONGS TO.
.....?!
THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT HIS EYES...
..THAT REMINDS ME OF A FRIEND OF MINE.
A GOOD FRIEND!

.....?!
I KNOW LEENE'S HAD STRONG FEELINGS FOR YUUJEL SINCE THEY WERE CHILDREN.
IT WAS SO OBVIOUS. I THINK THE ENTIRE COURT WAS WAGERING ON WHETHER THEY'D END UP TOGETHER...
...IN SPITE OF YUUJEL'S PROPOSED MARRIAGE TO PRINCESS ISHTAR

WHAT'S GOING ON OVER THERE?
DID WE COME ALL THE WAY OUT HERE JUST FOR GIRL-TALK?
.....
THEY'RE PROBABLY JUST FEELING EACH OTHER OUT.
MAYBE. BUT I'VE GOT A FEELING WE DON'T KNOW WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON HERE. NOT YET



YUUJGL ALWAYS...
...SAID THAT HE THOUGHT OF LEENE...
...AS HIS LITTLE SISTER.
BUT WAS HE JUST SAYING THAT BECAUSE HE KNEW...
...HOW I FEEL ABOUT HER?

BUT I COULD NEVER REALLY FIGURE OUT...
...HOW THAT BOY OF MINE FELT ABOUT HER.
I DIDN'T THINK THEY WERE IN LOVE.

LADY SONIA...
...THEIR SUICIDE PACT WASN'T YOUR FAULT. YOU CAN'T BLAME YOURSELF FOR THE FOLLY OF YOUTH.
THAT'S ALL BEHIND US NOW LEENE AND I ARE HAPPILY MARRIED
SUICIDE?
I'M SO SORRY, ASHLEY! I DIDN'T MEAN TO TALK ABOUT YOUR WIFE THAT WAY, OR TO DRAG SKELETONS OUT OF THEIR CLOSETS...
YES! YES, I KNOW!
I THOUGHT IT WAS IN ALL OF OUR BEST INTERESTS TO STRENGTHEN OUR TIES TO WHAT'S LEFT OF HIS LINE. MAYBE HE WAS JUST BEING STUBBORN, BUT...
HOW MUCH I WANTED HIM TO MARRY PRINCESS ISHTAR OUR SIDE OF THE FAMILY HAS SUCH A WEAK LINK TO THE BLOOD OF OUR PROTECTOR, ST PHELIOS
AND HE KNEW...
YES...
...I SUPPOSE THAT MUST BE IT.
...AT ANY RATE, I CERTAINLY DIDN'T CONSIDER YUUJEL'S FEELINGS.
OR LEENE'S, FOR THAT MATTER. OR EVEN PRINCESS ISHTAR'S.
WHAT KIND OF A MOTHER PUSHES HER OWN CHILD TO TRY AND KILL HIMSELF? AND POOR LEENE
...HAVE BEEN SO HORRIBLE?
HOW COULD I...

LADY SONIA!
DON'T DROP HER, YOU DOLT!
!!
MAYBE KELD WAS RIGHT! LADY SONIA WOULD SEEM TO BE SICKER THAN SHE'S LETTING ON...
.....?!

THOSE PEOPLE WOULD LIKE NOTHING MORE THAN TO POISON MY MIND AGAINST YOU BUT I HAVE GREAT FAITH IN YOU. I ALWAYS HAVE
EVEN SO, THERE ARE ALWAYS PEOPLE WHO ARE JEALOUS OF THOSE WITH ABILITY
I WAS SO PROUD WHEN YOU BECAME OUR ARMY'S YOUNGEST GENERAL. EVERYONE SAYS YOU'RE SECOND TO NONE WHEN IT COMES TO TACTICS.
ASHLEY..
I WANT YOU TO PROMISE ME YOU'LL TAKE CARE OF BOTH ZI ALDA AND THAT FOOLISH SON OF MINE, YUU--
AND IF SOMETHING WERE EVER TO HAPPEN TO ME...
AAGH!

...YOU UP FOR A LITTLE STEEPLE-CHASE?
OKAY, LEENE...
IT'S OKAY! I LIKE THIS HORSE!
AND I THINK HE LIKES ME TOO!
ヒヒーン
HUH?!

IF SHE DIES HERE, I'LL NEVER KNOW IF SHE'S PHELIOS.
I'VE GOT TO KEEP HER ALIVE LONG ENOUGH TO FIND OUT.
ヒョイ
PRINCESS ISHTAR!
BE CAREFUL!

NOW THERE'S SOMETHING YOU DON'T SEE EVERY DAY...
A HORSE WITH TWO ASSES!
CAREFUL, MY LADY...
...YOU DON'T WANT TO UNDERES-TIMATE HER
.....?!

I CAN RESPECT THAT.
?!
THAT'S BECAUSE SHE CAN'T RIDE LIKE THAT!
WAIT A MINUTE —
MY GOD! DID YOU SEE HER CLEAR THAT FENCE?! I DIDN'T KNOW ISHTAR COULD RIDE LIKE THAT!
FORGET IT! DON'T ANSWER THAT! JUST GET ME MY BLOOD HORSE!
SHE CAN'T?! THEN WHAT THE HELL ARE WE JUST STANDING AROUND HERE FOR?!

BUT CAN YOU PLEASE SLOW DOWN AND LET ME OFF FIRST?!
OKAY, MR. MYSTERY HORSE, THAT WAS A 30-FOOT CLIFF YOU JUST JUMPED OFF!
IF YOU WANT TO KILL YOURSELF, FINE!
WHAT WOULD DARRES DO IN THIS SITUATION? C'MON, ISHTAR! THINK!
I DON'T THINK HE'S LISTENING...

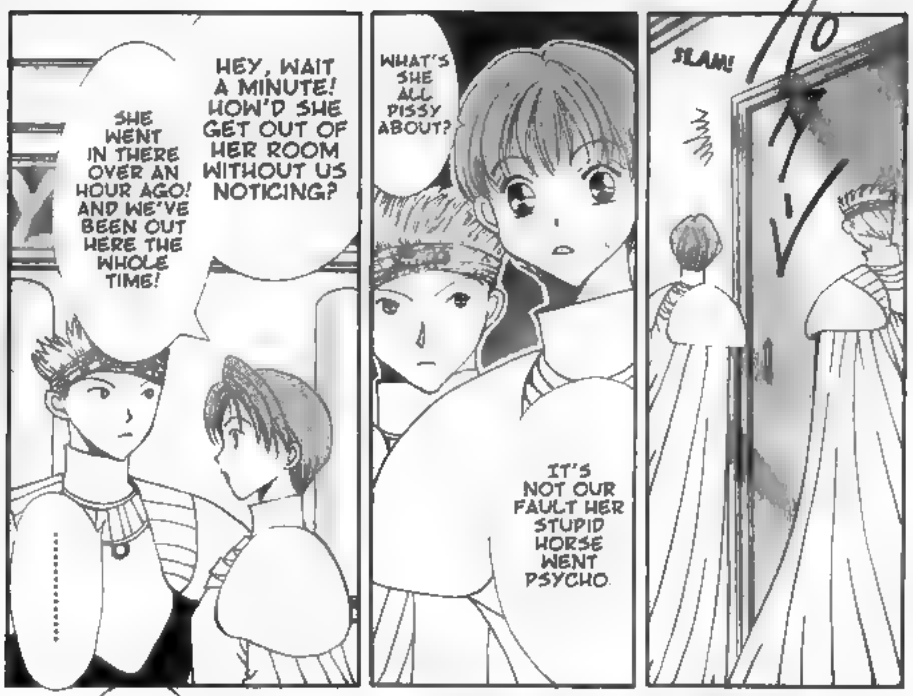
DARRES WOULDN'T GET IN THIS SITUATION!
A'AAGH!
WHY DOES THIS STUFF ALWAYS HAPPEN TO ME?!

YOU KNOW, YOUR MAJESTY, THERE ARE BETTER WAYS TO SEE THE COUNTRY SIDE.
YUJINN!!

HUH?! I RECOGNIZE THAT VOICE!

吸血遊戯
南領篇
Act.5

IN PERSON.
ALTHOUGH, THEY HAVE A DIFFERENT NAME FOR ME HERE.
DO YOU REMEMBER A SILLY LITTLE BOY NAMED YUUJEL?
GRIN
WHAT?!! YOU'RE...?! NO WAY!!!


SHE WENT IN THERE OVER AN HOUR AGO! AND WE'VE BEEN OUT HERE THE WHOLE TIME!
HEY, WAIT A MINUTE! HOW'D SHE GET OUT OF HER ROOM WITHOUT US NOTICING?
.....
WHAT'S SHE ALL PISSY ABOUT?
IT'S NOT OUR FAULT HER STUPID HORSE WENT PSYCHO.
SLAM!

GUARDING THE PRINCESS IS IMPOSSIBLE. EVERYONE KNOWS IT, SO NO ONE CARES IF WE SCREW UP!
YOU'RE KIDDING, RIGHT?
SHE ALWAYS MANAGES TO SNEAK OUT! WHY DO YOU THINK I PUT IN FOR THIS JOB?
HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN GUARDING THE PRINCESS?

WELCOME BACK, PRINCESS ISHTAR! WE WERE WORRIED ABOUT YOU!
GOOD JOB TODAY.

OH, IT'S YOU, DUZIE!
I HEARD HE TRIED TO COMM.T SUICIDE WITH ASHLEY'S WIFE. SHE WAS IN LOVE WITH HIM OR SOMETHING.
I'll never understand you humans throwing your little lives around like they mean something.
OKAY, THAT'S COOL AND ALL, BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT I WAS...
ぽた
ぽた
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BELIEVE THIS! YOU KNOW MY COUSIN, YUUJEL?
ぽた

NO KIDDING?
WELL, IF YOU PUT IT THAT WAY...
...HOW ABOUT A BEER, PART-NER?!

NOW YOU'RE TALKIN'!!!
They've got to stop grading the guards' exam on a curve...

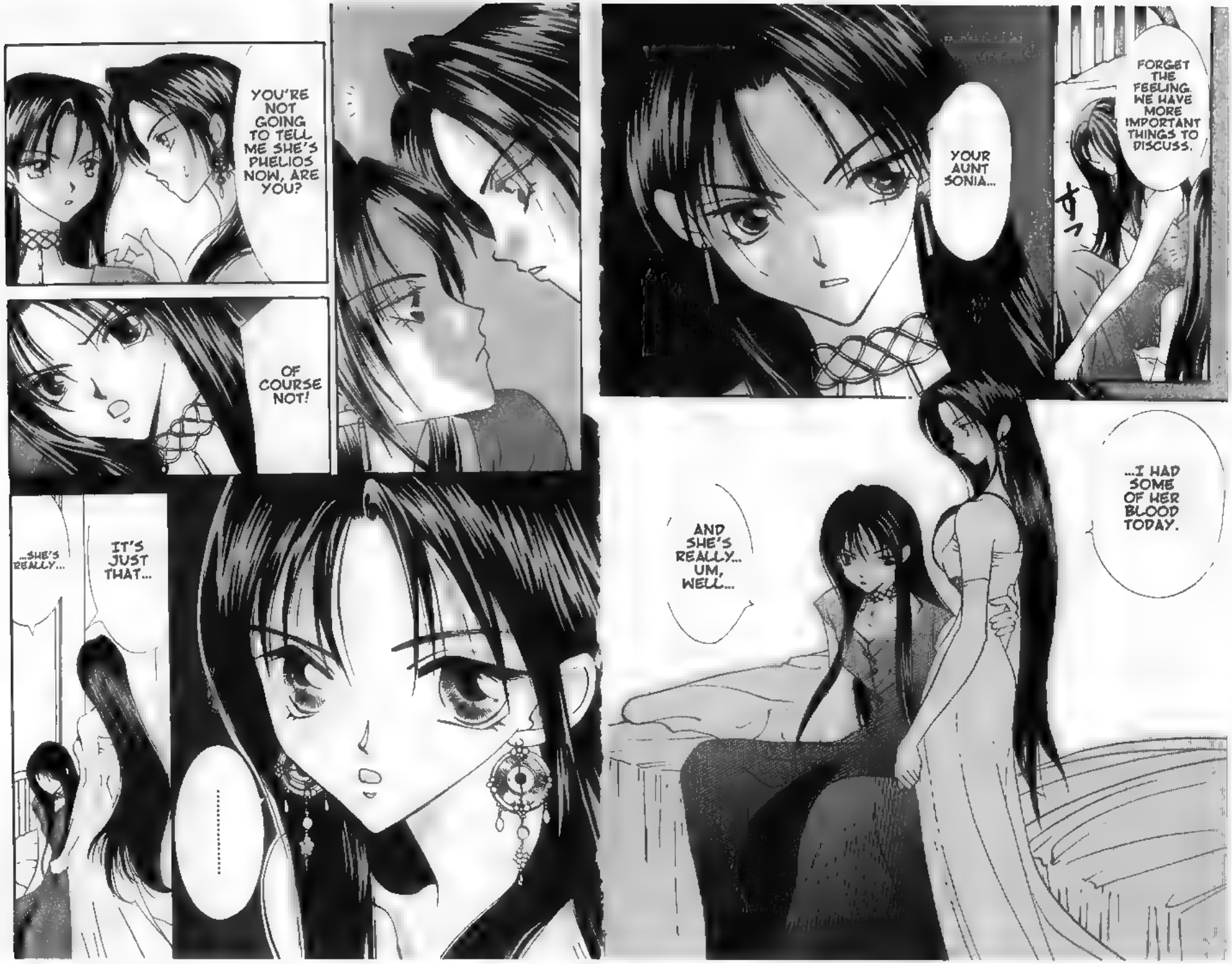
ぽん

?
ISN'T THAT WHAT I JUST SAID?
BUT NOT YUJINN, THAT OTHER GUY... YUUJEL.
LEENE...
THEY HAD A SUICIDE PACT?! AND THEY TRIED TO GO THROUGH WITH IT?!
...AND YUJINN!!!
DUZIE...
...THAT'S WHAT I WANTED TO TELL YOU!

WHAT?!
.....
YUJINN + LEENE...
ASHLEY'S WIFE = LEENE
YUUJEL = YUJINN
THAT CAN'T BE!!

YOU KNOW I GET A FUNNY FEELING WHEN HE'S AROUND! THERE'S NO WAY I CAN BITE HIM!!
THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING !!!
YOU GET A FUNNY FEELING AROUND YUJINN?
はっ
Oh, shut up!
YOU LITTLE DEVIL!

I SAID THAT YUJINN IS REALLY MY COUSIN YUUJEL!
HUH?
YUJINN IS YUUJEL!
YUUJIN = YUUJEL
YUJINN = ROYALTY
YUJINN = MIGHT BE PHELIOS
WHAT, WHAT, WHAAAT?!!


YOU'RE NOT GOING TO TELL ME SHE'S PHELIOS NOW, ARE YOU?
OF COURSE NOT!
IT'S JUST THAT...
...SHE'S REALLY...
.....
YOUR AUNT SONIA...
FORGET THE FEELING. WE HAVE MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO DISCUSS.
...I HAD SOME OF HER BLOOD TODAY.
AND SHE'S REALLY... UM, WELL...

THAT'S THE HORSE THAT TRIED TO THROW PRINCESS ISHTAR! WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
I TOLD THE STABLEMASTER TO HAVE HIM PUT DOWN! I'M GOING TO HAVE THAT SON OF A BITCH'S HEAD! FIRST HE GIVES ISHTAR THE WRONG HORSE, THEN HE DISOBEYS MY ORDER!
HOLD ON A SECOND! YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE A HORSE SLAUGHTERED JUST BECAUSE IT WENT CRAZY?
IT'S NOT THE HORSE'S FAULT! ISHTAR DRIVES EVERYONE CRAZY--WHY SHOULD THE HORSE BE ANY DIFFERENT?!
SHE'S SICK, ISHTAR. REALLY SICK.
.....
.....

I'M SORRY. I SHOULDN'T HAVE SAID THAT.
WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO LOSE?
LOOK, I'LL MAKE A DEAL WITH YOU...
IF I CAN BREAK THIS HORSE SO THAT ANYONE CAN RIDE HIM, WILL YOU AGREE TO LET HIM LIVE?
IT SENT THREE OF THE GROOMS TO THE INFIRMARY! NO ONE COULD GET NEAR IT, MUCH LESS RIDE IT! AND WHAT'S MORE, I'M NOT USED TO THE PALACE STAFF DISOBEYING MY ORDERS!
THERE'S SOMETHING NOT RIGHT ABOUT THAT STALLION IT CONTINUED ITS RAMPAGE LONG AFTER WE RETURNED IT TO THE STABLE!
THE PRINCESS ISN'T TO BLAME.
I SAW HER MOUNT THE HORSE, SHE DID NOTHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY
TRUST ME, IF ANYONE DESERVES TO BE PUT DOWN, IT'S THE PRINCESS!
YOU'RE WRONG. I'VE BEEN RIDING HORSES SINCE CHILDHOOD, AND ONE THING I LEARNED IS THAT THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A BAD HORSE. JUST INCOMPETENT HUMANS, TRYING TO COVER THEIR OWN ASSES
?!

LUCY, WHY DON'T YOU LET HIM TRY IT?
YOU NEVER KNOW, HE MIGHT SURPRISE YOU.
OR HE MIGHT GET HIS NECK BROKEN EITHER WAY, IT SHOULD BE ENTERTAINING.
?!

YOU'LL WHAT?
...NO ONE CAN BLAME YOU FOR LETTING THE PRINCESS RIDE A DANGEROUS ANIMAL. DEAL?
I'LL TRAIN HIM SO THAT EVEN THE WORST RIDER CAN HANDLE HIM. THAT WAY...

YOU OBVIOUSLY DON'T KNOW SIR DARRES!
HE HAS A SPECIAL PLACE IN HIS HEART FOR DUMB ANIMALS.
LIKE THEY'RE FAMILY OR SOMETHING.
I GUESS SO. BUT WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

YUUJEL....
THE BOTTOM LINE IS THAT WE MUST DO SOMETHING THE LAST TIME ISHTAR WAS NEARLY KILLED BY AN ANIMAL...
...SHE ADOPTED THE CREATURE'S OFFSPRING AS A PET. GOD ONLY KNOWS WHAT SHE'LL DO HERE.
YUJINN!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
にっこり
IT'S A BIT INVOLVED.
AND I REALLY AM SORRY THAT I COULDN'T TELL YOU UNTIL NOW. MY REAL NAME IS...
10
.....

YOU DON'T SAY. WELL, YES, UM, HE IS VERY GOOD AT THAT DOCTORING STUFF...
THANK YOU, ISHTAR!
IF YOUR PERSONAL DOCTOR HADN'T HAPPENED BY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WOULD HAVE DONE!
I THOUGHT MY HEART WAS GOING TO STOP! IT FELT LIKE THERE WASN'T A DROP OF BLOOD LEFT IN MY VEINS!
YOU DON'T DO HIM JUSTICE. I'M FEELING BETTER THAN I HAVE IN YEARS!
And he's easy on the eyes! That's one doctor I wouldn't mind playing doctor with.

WHAAAAT?!!

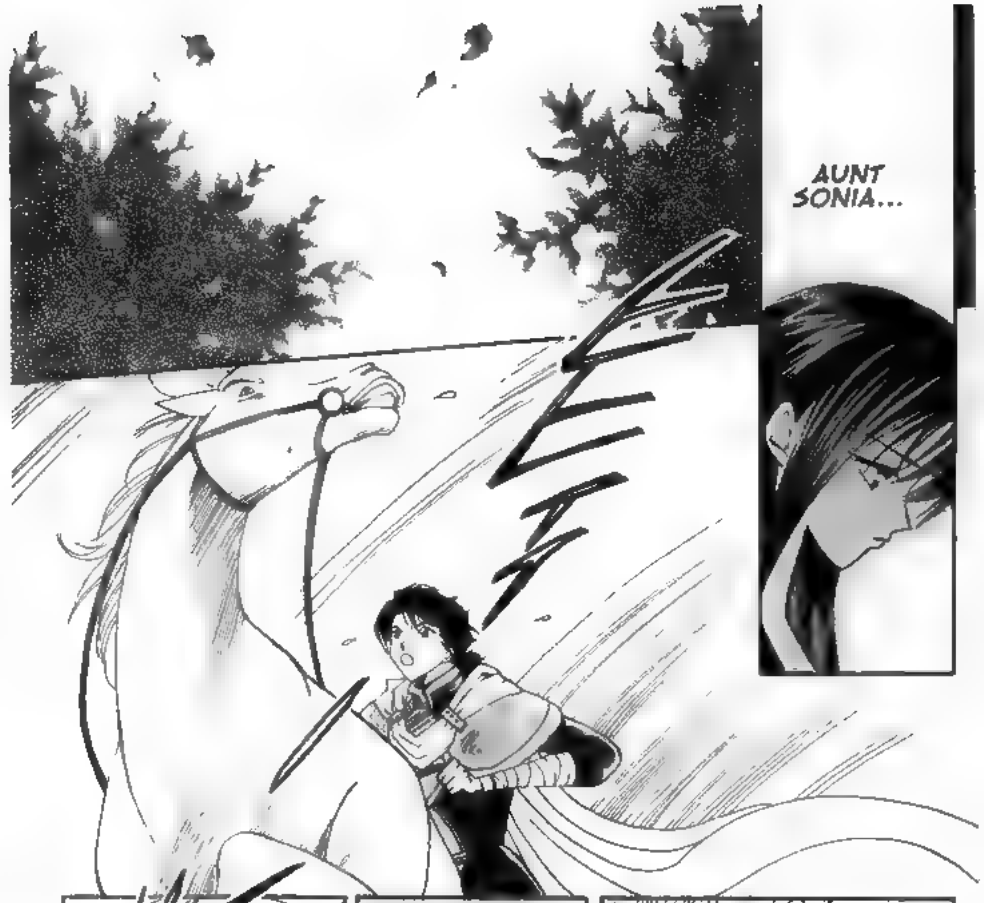
HE'S HERE! I JUST SAW HIM!
YOU DID? HOW SPLENDID!
GOSH, THE LAST TIME YOU TWO SAW EACH OTHER YOU WERE PRACTICALLY TODDLERS. YOU KNOW, THEY SAY YOU NEVER FORGET YOUR FIRST LOVE...
Or your first enemy!

THANK YOU AGAIN, GOOD DOCTOR!
EITHER WAY, HE HAS MY SYM-PATHIES.
ISHTAR HAS HER OWN DOCTOR? DOES HE TREAT THE INJURIES SHE GETS...OR INFLICTS?
I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM YET, BUT I HEAR...
OH, AND I HAVE MORE GOOD NEWS!
KNOWING MY BOY...
...HE'LL PROBABLY STROLL INTO THE HALL DURING ONE OF OUR DINNER PARTIES AND POUR HIMSELF SOME WINE, AS IF HE HAD NEVER LEFT.
...MY SON, YUUJEL, IS BACK HOME! ISN'T THAT EXCITING?!
SUCH A NICE SURPRISE!

THIS ISN'T THE FIRST TIME THIS WAS HAPPENED
BUT I'M FINE. REALLY.
THANK YOU FOR THINKING OF ME, ISHTAR. YOU'RE TOO KIND
BESIDES, YUUJEL MAY POP IN AT ANY MOMENT! I MUST BE HERE TO GREET HIM.
AND AS LONG AS YOUR DOCTOR'S HERE, I CAN GUARANTEE IT WON'T BE THE LAST
.....
ANYWAYS, AUNT SONIA...
...MY DOCTOR WAS JUST SAYING THAT YOU...
...REALLY NEED TO GET SOME REST.
AND, UM...
...MAKE ME A CAPE. KIND OF LIKE HIS, BUT GREEN.
IT'S REALLY IMPORTANT FOR YOUR RECOVERY!

I HOPE YOU'RE NOT MAD ABOUT THE WHOLE "BREAKING YOUR NECK" THING. IT WAS JUST A JOKE, DARRES. I'M SORRY.
YOU THINK IT'S THAT?!
GUESS AGAIN.
HOW ABOUT LYING TO US, AND PRETENDING YOU'RE SOMEONE YOU'RE NOT?!

YOU COULD LEARN A THING OR TWO FROM HER, DARRES.
BUT THEN AGAIN, SHE'S NEVER REALLY CONCERNED HERSELF WITH TRIFLES.
OH, THAT... IT WAS NECES-SARY. PRINCESS ISHTAR FORGAVE ME.


AUNT SONIA...

I STILL CAN'T FIGURE OUT...
...WHY YOU NEEDED TO MASQUERADE AS HER MAGIC TEACHER IF YOU WANTED TO GET CLOSER TO PRINCESS ISHTAR, WHY NOT JUST COURT HER LIKE ANY OTHER SUITOR?
YOU'RE VERY WELL QUALIFIED.

TRIFLES?
THERE'S NOTHING TRIVIAL ABOUT MISREPRESENTING YOURSELF TO GET A JOB IN HER MAJESTY'S SERVICE! IF YOU WERE A GUARD, YOU'D BE COURT-MARTIALED!
AND THERE'S SOMETHING YOU'RE STILL NOT TELLING ME! ISN'T THERE?!
I HAVEN'T TOLD YOU WHETHER I PREFER YUJINN OR YUUJEL.
TRUTH IS, I DON'T CARE.
CALL ME WHICH-EVER YOU PREFER.
!!
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT!

I THINK IT WAS THE RIGHT CHOICE.
NOW I JUST HAVE TO WIN YOU OVER. YOU SEE, DARRES, I WENT TO THE CAPITAL TO SEE ONCE AND FOR ALL IF I WAS REALLY...
WELL...
...HOW SHOULD I PUT THIS?
REALLY WHAT?

SIMPLE, REALLY.
WHY THE SMOKE AND MIRRORS?
PRINCESS ISHTAR HATES ME. SHE'D HAVE TURNED ME AWAY AT THE GATE IF I APPROACHED HER LIKE A NORMAL SUITOR.
SO I GAMBLED ON GETTING TO KNOW HER FIRST, AND BEGGING FOR FORGIVENESS LATER
.....
The guy makes a good point.

吸血遊戯
南領篇
Act.6
ISHTAR...
I ALWAYS THOUGHT YOU WERE JOKING.
WHEN I GROW UP, I'M GONNA MARRY DARRES!

DO YOU KNOW...
...JUST HOW MUCH PRINCESS ISHTAR...
...CARES FOR YOU?
?!

ARE YOU SAYING I'M THE REASON ISHTAR HAS BEEN...
...REJECTING ALL HER SUITORS?

吸血遊戯
ゼ・アルダ
南領篇
Act.6

OH, DARRES, OPEN YOUR EYES.
SHE DOES ALL THAT TO GET YOUR ATTENTION. THINK ABOUT IT. YOU COMPLETELY IGNORE HER UNLESS SHE'S IN SOME SORT OF PREDICAMENT.
.....
.....
THAT'S RIDICULOUS.
CONSIDERING THAT SHE'S ALWAYS IN TROUBLE, HOW WOULD YOU EVEN KNOW HOW I TREAT HER?

SHE HAS A FUNNY WAY OF SHOWING IT.
WHEN SHE WAS A LITTLE GIRL, YOU WERE THE CENTER OF HER WORLD NOTHING'S REALLY CHANGED SHE LOVES YOU LIKE A CHILD . AND A WOMAN.
COULD BE.
.....
THEN WHY'S SHE ALWAYS CAUSING TROUBLE FOR ME?

...BUT I JUST HAD TO SEE IT WITH MY OWN EYES.
I'VE BEEN LOOKING ALL OVER FOR YOU!
LEENE....

A GOOD POINT. I WOULDN'T... BUT SHE WOULD.
?!
I HEARD YOU WERE BACK...

"...WITH HIS BEST FRIEND'S WIFE..."
...
ポロ
ポロ
ポロ
...HOW MUCH I'VE MISSED YOU!
YOU HAVE NO IDEA...

?
?
GOOD JOB TODAY.
.....
.....

IT'S HARD TO SAY. NOT LONG, THOUGH. A DECADE, MAYBE?
THAT'S KINDA LONG...
DUZIE...
...HOW LONG DOES AUNT SONIA HAVE LEFT?
IS IT? WHEN YOU'RE IMMORTAL, THAT'S NOT MUCH TIME AT ALL.
I'VE TAKEN NAPS THAT HAVE LASTED FOR MORE THAN A DECADE.

VAMPIRE?
IF YOU WANT MY HELP, WHY DON'T YOU JUST ASK?
.....
IT'S QUITE EASY, AND RELATIVELY PAINLESS...
ISN'T THAT WHAT ALL YOU HUMANS WANT? TO LIVE FOREVER?
I COULD GIVE IT TO HER, YOU KNOW. ETERNAL LIFE...
SO WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS THAT SHE'S GOING TO GO SOON...
...OR A WIZARD... OR A...
I WISH THERE WAS SOMETHING I COULD DO ABOUT IT. IF ONLY I WERE A DOCTOR...
...BUT YOU'RE NOT SURE WHEN?

THAT'S KINDA GROSS, DUZIE AUNT SONIA'S ANCIENT.
YEAH, BUT SHE LOOKS IT YOU DON'T. BESIDES, I CAN'T SEE AUNT SONIA AS A VAMPIRE SHE FAINTS AT THE SIGHT OF BLOOD.
SO AM I.
ISHTAR...
WELL, LIKE LOVERS, I SUPPOSE.
WE'D BE MORE LIKE...
I SUPPOSE THAT'S ONE WAY OF PUTTING IT THOUGH IT'S NOT LIKE WE'D BE BEST BUDDIES OR ANYTHING
FRIENDS?
YOU MEAN...
...YOU'D BE WILLING TO DRINK AUNT SONIA'S BLOOD AND MAKE HER ONE OF YOUR VAMPIRE FRIENDS?
BUT IN THIS RELATIONSHIP, I'D HAVE ALL THE CONTROL.

LEENE...
HOW ARE YOU AND ASHLEY DOING? IS EVERYTHING OKAY?
NO, IT'S NOT! AND YOU KNOW IT!!
YOU TRICKED ME!
YOU HAD IT ALL PLANNED OUT! YOU CONVINCED ME TO DO THINGS YOU KNEW WOULD CAUSE TROUBLE, THEN CONVINCED YOUR PAL ASHLEY TO PROPOSE TO ME WHEN I WAS FEELING LOW!
HE MIGHT MAKE A GOOD VAMPIRE. AND IF HE WAS IMMORTAL, I'D NEVER HAVE TO WATCH HIM...
...GROW OLD AND DIE.
DARRES, ON THE OTHE HAND..
.....!!

...THAT NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENED, YOU WOULD ALWAYS BE THE MAN I LOVED!
くるん
すたすたすた
I'LL NEVER LET ANYONE ELSE HAVE YOU! EVER! REMEMBER THAT!!

YOU WANTED ME TO GIVE UP!
WHY?! DO YOU HATE ME THAT MUCH?!
TROUBLE? WHAT KIND OF TROUBLE?
I TOLD YOU...

AND WITH ISHTAR INVOLVED, THE CHANCE OF DISASTER IS HIGH.
MATCHMAKING IS OBVIOUSLY NOT ONE OF MY STRENGTHS.
WHAT?
PRINCESS ISHTAR WAS MY FIRST LOVE.
YOU'LL PROBABLY NEVER BELIEVE THIS, BUT I ASSURE YOU IT'S TRUE.
YOU CAN'T REALLY MEAN THAT! BUT THE FIRST TIME YOU SAW HER, YOU WERE THIRTEEN AND SHE WAS FIVE! THAT'S NOT LOVE. THAT'S JUST SICK!

BUT GETTING BACK TO PRINCESS ISHTAR...
SOMETHING LIKE THAT. IT'S A LONG STORY.
FRIEND OF YOURS?
.....
ON SECOND THOUGHT, MAYBE I SHOULD LET THIS LITTLE MESS BE A LESSON TO ME.

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?
DARRES...
...AGE AND GENDER MEAN NOTHING WHEN IT COMES TO TRUE LOVE.
BESIDES, I SAID SHE WAS MY FIRST LOVE..
...NOT MY CURRENT ONE.
I CAME TO PHELIOSTA LOOKING FOR SOMEONE TO LOVE, DARRES AND I FOUND HIM.

OF COURSE, THE SAME THING COULD BE SAID OF VAMPIRES...
WE COULD.
BUT KILLING HER ISN'T PERMANENT ENOUGH TO SATISFY YOUR TASTE FOR VENGEANCE. TRUST ME ON THAT.
NO, THERE ARE FAR BETTER WAYS TO GET REVENGE.
BUT YOU COULD USE YOUR MAGIC ON THE WOMAN HE'S IN LOVE WITH, RIGHT?
CAN'T WE JUST GET RID OF PRINCESS ISHTAR?
THERE HAS TO BE A SPELL FOR THIS, RIGHT? SOMETHING THAT WILL MAKE HIM FORGET ABOUT HER AND FALL IN LOVE WITH ME?!
DAMMIT, DIAAGE! WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?!
THAT'S WHAT I LOVE ABOUT YOU HUMANS. YOUR CAPACITY FOR LOVE MAKES YOU WEAK AND EASY TO MANIPULATE.
I'M SORRY, MY DEAR. THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT EVEN MAGIC CAN'T DO.

?!
...BUT ALSO THE STRENGTH TO DIE.
SHE'LL DRIFT THROUGH EXISTENCE TOO MISERABLE TO EVEN TAKE HER OWN LIFE.
THEN AGAIN, THIS IS PRETTY STRONG REVENGE FOR WHAT AMOUNTS TO A LITTLE LOVE SPAT.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN IT'S NOT PERMANENT ENOUGH?
OH, NEVER MIND. WHAT SHOULD I DO?
I'M NOT JUST TALKING ABOUT TAKING AWAY HER WILL TO LIVE THAT'S FAR TOO SIMPLE.
ONCE IT'S ALL GONE AND YOU'VE PUT HER IN SUCH EXQUISITE AGONY...
...YOU'LL NOT ONLY HAVE ROBBED HER OF THE WILL TO LIVE...
TAKE AWAY EVERYTHING SHE LOVES. TAKE EVERY-THING SHE NEEDS
MAKE HER SUFFER.

A LITTLE LOVE SPAT?!
SO, UM, WHERE DO WE START? WHAT'S THE FIRST STEP?
C'MON, ARE WE GONNA POP THIS PRINCESS OR WHAT?!
AND IF SHE LACKS THE STRENGTH TO OFF HERSELF, I CAN ALWAYS PAY SOMEONE TO DO IT FOR ME!
IT'S PERFECT, DIAAGE! I WON'T REST UNTIL ISHTAR DIES OF MISERY!

"IF DARRES WAS IMMORTAL, I'D NEVER HAVE TO WATCH HIM GROW OLD AND DIE..."
PRINCESS ISHTAR...
YOU GAVE US ALL QUITE A SCARE!
...I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE OKAY!
I KNOW THAT WITH ALL THE CRAZINESS THIS MAY SEEM SUDDEN, BUT...
...ASHLEY AND I ARE HAVING A PARTY TONIGHT WE'D LOVE IT IF YOU CAME

KYA HA HA
NO NO NO

I'M AFRAID YOU HAVE ME AT A DISADVANTAGE, SIR.
I'M NOT MISTAKEN. YOU ARE DIAAGE, AREN'T YOU?
YOU KNOW MY NAME, BUT I DON'T KNOW YOURS. HAVE WE MET?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
?!
吸血遊戯
南領無
Act.7

DIAAGE?!
?!
DUZIE KNOWS HER?

吸血遊戯
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南領篇
Act.7

I SUPPOSE YOU CAN SAY THAT WE'RE FAMILY.
YOU NEVER TOLD ME YOU HAD A FAMILY!
FAMILY?

WELL, DUZIE... YOU'VE BEEN HOLDING OUT ON ME.
WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON BETWEEN YOU AND MISS MIDNIGHT OVER THERE?
YOU MEAN DIAAGE?
WE WEREN'T LOVERS, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE INFERRING. HARDLY EVEN FRIENDS, IN FACT.

MY LORD IS INDISPOSED! HE MUSTN'T BE BOTHERED.
MY ORDERS ARE TO LET NO ONE PASS. IF YOU GO IN THERE, IT WILL BE BOTH OF OUR NECKS!
LADY DIAAGE!
LADY DIAAGE!
..WAS A VAMPIRE COUNTESS.
THE DIAAGE I KNEW...
IN FACT, I DON'T EVEN THINK THAT'S THE SAME DIAAGE. BUT WHOEVER SHE IS, SHE LOOKS JUST LIKE HER.
I DOUBT IT.
YOU MEAN SHE'S A VAMPIRE?! WHAT'S SHE DOING HERE? IS SHE LOOKING FOR PHELIOS TOO?

HAVE YOU LOST YOUR MIND? I REALLY HOPE THIS WAR WITH THE HUMANS IS YOUR IDEA OF A BAD JOKE.
...BUT I DON'T SEE HOW MY SPORT WITH THE HUMANS CONCERNS YOU.
TACTFUL AS ALWAYS, DIAAGE.
YOUR INTRUSION HONORS ME, OF COURSE...
INDIS-POSED... IS THAT WHAT THEY CALL...
...GOING TO WAR THESE DAYS?

NO, THE DIAAGE I KNEW...
..WOULDN'T FORGET ME. CERTAINLY NOT AFTER A MERE ONE HUNDRED YEARS.
WHY, DUZELL ...
..WHEREVER DID YOU HEAR SUCH A RIDICULOUS THING?
WHEN YOU BAD BOYS GET TOGETHER, YOU'RE WORSE THAN A ROOM FULL OF SCHOOL-GIRLS.
I MEAN, IMAGINE! YOU! AGAINST ME? I'M SURE EVEN SOMEONE AS DOUR AS YOU CAN SEE THE HUMOR IN THAT! I'D GIGGLE MYSELF TO PIECES WHILE BINDING YOUR SOUL TO ETERNAL DAMNATION...
PERHAPS A BATTLE BETWEEN THE TWO OF US WOULD BE MORE FULFILLING THAN TOYING WITH THOSE PITIFUL LITTLE HUMANS, EH?
WELL, UNLESS YOU'RE JUST AS BORED WITH THIS EXISTENCE AS I AM. TELL ME, DO YOU REALLY THINK I'VE BECOME "POMPOUS AND PATHETIC"? OR IS THAT JUST THE KIND OF THING THAT GETS WHISPERED BEHIND MY BACK?
#7

MAYBE IT'S HIM AGAIN! OR MAYBE HER NAME IS SOME KIND OF CODE WORD...
...FOR A VAMPIRE CONSPIRACY OR SOMETHING!
MAYBE SHE REALLY IS SHARLEN...OR ONE OF HIS PROGENY.
BUT THEN, IF SHARLEN'S SO YOUNG THAT HE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW ME...
.....
"HOW WOULD HE KNOW ABOUT DIAAGE," MUCH LESS WHAT SHE LOOKED LIKE?

BUT IF SHE'S A VAMPIRE COUNTESS ...
...THAT MEANS SHE'S A PRETTY CLOSE RELATIVE, RIGHT?
MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT. MAYBE SHE JUST LOOKS LIKE DIAAGE.
THEN WHY DIDN'T SHE RECOGNIZE YOU? THAT IS YOUR TRUE FORM, RIGHT?
HE CALLED HIMSELF "DIAAGE" IN CI XENETH, DIDN'T HE?
RE-MEMBER THAT OTHER VAMPIRE, SHARLEN'S
WAIT A SECOND!
BUT IF IT'S JUST A COINCIDENCE, WHY WOULD SHE HAVE THE SAME NAME?
COULD BE.

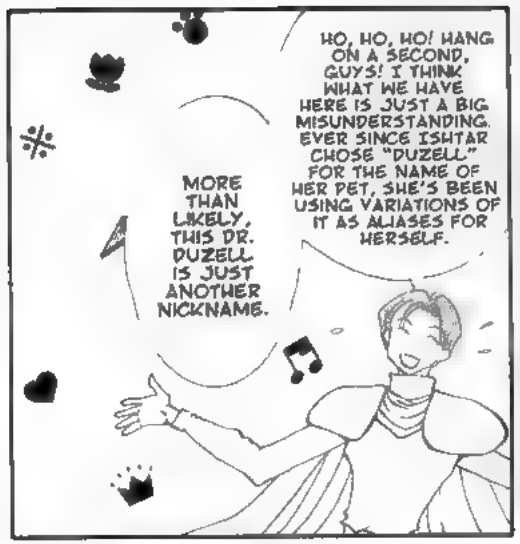
I SUPPOSE IT'S POSSIBLE...
...THAT REALLY IS DIAAGE, AND SHARLEN'S USE OF THE NAME IS JUST COINCIDENCE.
HELL OF A COINCIDENCE, THOUGH. UNLESS...
ISHTAR, I'VE GOT TO CHECK SOMETHING OUT.

PROMISE THAT YOU'LL STAY WHERE DARRES CAN SEE YOU!
HUH? DUZIE! WHERE ARE YOU...?
SO, CAPTAIN...
...I HEAR YOU'VE BEEN SPENDING SOME SERIOUS TIME WITH THAT HORSE. I GUESS COMPARED TO THE PRINCESS, THAT MOUNT'S A PUSHOVER.
THINK YOU'LL GET HER BACK ON IT?
I DON'T KNOW.
WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?
WHENEVER SOMEONE ELSE TRIES TO RIDE HIM...
...HE STARTS BUCKING.
I'VE STILL GOT A LONG WAY TO GO.

BUT FORGET THE HORSE.
WHO'S THE CREEP TALKING TO ISHTAR? SHE'S BEEN ON HIS ARM ALL NIGHT.
I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM BEFORE, AND I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT HIM, BUT IF THERE'S ONE THING I KNOW, IT'S THAT PLATINUM BLONDES ARE ALWAYS TROUBLE.
OH, DON'T WORRY ABOUT HIM!
HE MAY LOOK LIKE A MANIC-DEPRESSIVE GYPSY, BUT HE'S ACTUALLY PRINCESS ISHTAR'S PERSONAL DOCTOR!
HER WHAT?

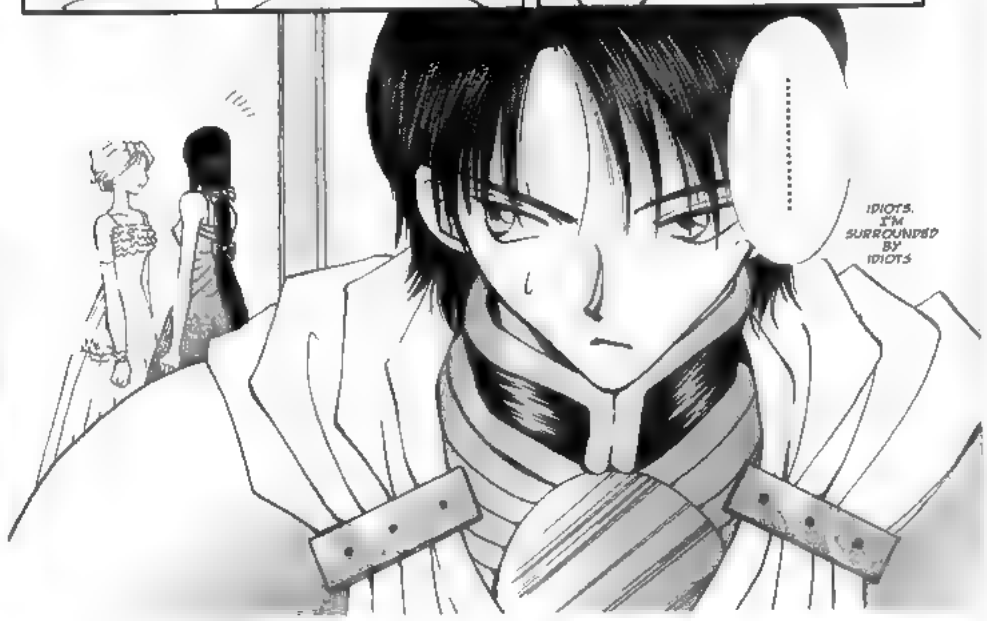
HER PERSONAL DOCTOR. IT WAS NEW TO US TOO. I DIDN'T REALIZE SHE HAD ONE.
HE JUST SHOWED UP WITH THE PRINCESS THIS AFTERNOON. SHE ACTED LIKE IT WAS COMPLETELY NORMAL, SO WE DIDN'T THINK ANY-THING OF IT
WHAT'S HIS NAME?
UH... DOOLEY-BELL OR SOME-THING.
DOOLEYBELL?! I DON'T BELIEVE THIS...
THAT'S THE VAMPIRE KING DUZELL, YOU MEATHEAD!!!
D-DOCTOR DOOLEYBELL IS REALLY THE VAMPIRE KING DUZELL?!

HEY, THAT'S ....!


HO, HO, HO! HANG ON A SECOND, GUYS! I THINK WHAT WE HAVE HERE IS JUST A BIG MISUNDERSTANDING. EVER SINCE ISHTAR CHOSE "DUZELL" FOR THE NAME OF HER PET, SHE'S BEEN USING VARIATIONS OF IT AS ALIASES FOR HERSELF.
MORE THAN LIKELY, THIS DR. DUZELL IS JUST ANOTHER NICKNAME.

BUT BUT... VAMPIRES CAN'T BE DOCTORS, CAN THEY?! I MEAN THEY'RE KNOWN FOR EATING PEOPLE, NOT TREATING THEM!

WHICH, OF COURSE, MEANS THAT THE DOCTOR'S NOT THE VAMPIRE KING, BUT PRINCESS ISHTAR HERSELF.


IDIOTS. I'M SURROUNDED BY IDIOTS

NO...
YOU'RE A PERFECT LIKENESS, BUT YOU'RE NOT DIAAGE, ARE YOU?
SO THEN, WHO ARE YOU?
DID YOUR MOTHER GIVE YOU TWO FACES? FIRST YOUR OWN, AND LATER, HERS...
COULD SHE...
...HAVE HAD A CHILD?

DIAAGE...

YOU NEARLY KILLED ME WHILE I LAY TRAPPED WITHIN THE BODY OF A KYAWL KITTEN.
I AM.
ALTHOUGH YOU WEREN'T SO CIVIL THE LAST TIME WE MET.
DO YOU REMEMBER? I WAS STILL GATHERING MY POWERS AFTER BEING REBORN.
I THOUGHT YOU WERE ONE OF MY OLD COMRADES, SO I SPARED YOU.
NOT THAT IT MATTERS, NOW
YOU HAVE BECOME A POWERFUL VAMPIRE, WITH GREAT AMBITION.
DON'T LET THAT AMBITION BE YOUR DOWN-FALL.

HELLO, SHARLEN.
I'M RIGHT, AREN'T I? YOU'RE THE GREAT AND HORRIBLE VAMPIRE KING.
... DUZELL?
HEH, HEH... SOMEONE'S BEEN DOING THEIR HOMEWORK. HAVEN'T THEY..

YOU'RE WARNING ME ABOUT AMBITION? AND YOU THOUGHT I WAS ONE OF YOUR FRIENDS?
THAT'S TOO MUCH!
IF YOU REALLY ARE DUZELL...
THEN WHAT TURNED YOU INTO SUCH A SOFT-HEARTED SAP?! DID YOU FALL IN LOVE? PLEASE, YOU MUST TELL ME I'D HATE FOR THE SAME THING TO HAPPEN TO ME.
ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE THE VAMPIRE KING DUZELL? THE DUZELL OF LEGEND HAD NEITHER FRIENDS NOR MERCY. ONLY PUPPETS AND RUTHLESS AMBITION!
HAVE I REALLY CHANGED THAT MUCH?

AND WHY ARE YOU HAUNTING THE ROYAL FAMILY OF PHELJOSTA?
TELL ME...
..WHAT'S BECOME OF THE REAL DIAAGE?
?!
HA HA HA

FLAP
!!
MY WORK HERE IS DONE.
THE SEEDS OF JEALOUSY AND MISTRUST HAVE BEEN SOWN. NOW, HUMAN NATURE WILL FOLLOW ITS NATURAL COURSE.
AND THE HOUSE OF PHELIOSTA WILL CRUMBLE!
AND YOU, VAMPIRE KING... YOU WILL SUFFER
SHARLEN!!
LADY LEENE...
...WOULD YOU GRACE US WITH A SONG?
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME.

WHAT'S UP WITH THAT?
THE MEN HERE TONIGHT! I MUST APOLOGIZE FOR THEIR MANNERS. CAN'T THEY SEE I'M TRYING TO HAVE A CONVERSATION?
ANYWAYS ...
...WHAT I REALLY WANTED TO ASK YOU WAS--
EXCUSE ME..
WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON HERE? THAT'S, LIKE, THE TWENTIETH GUY WHO'S TRIED TO TALK TO LEENE IN THE PAST HOUR!
LEENE'S CUTE AND ALL, BUT THIS IS A BIT EXCESSIVE. AND BESIDES, I HAVE THE BETTER DRESS!
Sigh!

REALLY? SIR YUUJEL?
I FORGOT!
LEENE AND YU-JINN HAD A SUICIDE PACT!
YOU ARE SO RIGHT.
EXCEPT FOR SIR YUUJEL, ALL MEN ARE DOGS.

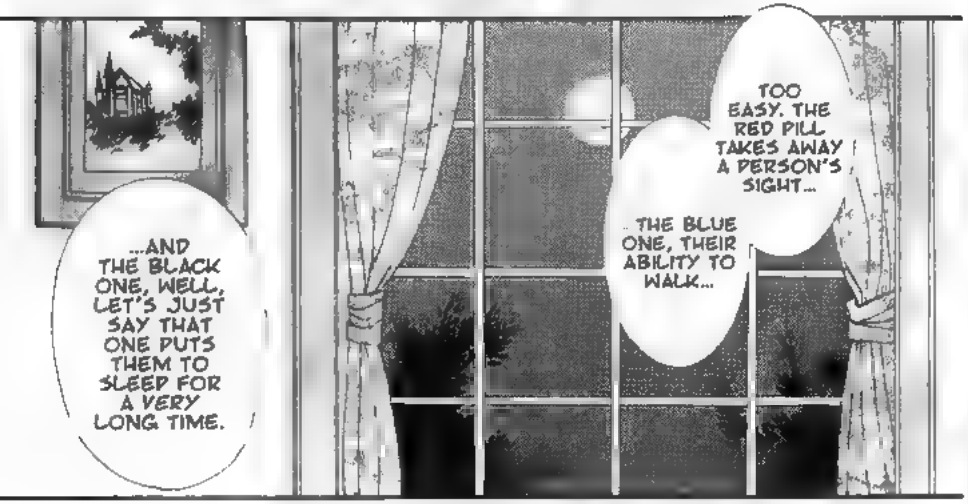
PLEASE, IT'S NO SECRET THAT I'M ONE OF THE BEST-LOOKING GIRLS IN ZI ALDA.
THINGS HAVE DIED DOWN A LOT SINCE I GOT MARRIED BUT WHEN YOU'VE GOT IT, YOU'VE GOT IT.
Nana-nana-NA-NA!
THE GUYS AROUND HERE CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF YOU.
WOW, LEENE!
WHAT'S YOUR SECRET?
THAT'S IT. THIS BITCH IS GOING DOWN...
ATTENTION FROM PEOPLE YOU DON'T LIKE IS JUST ANNOYING.
NO DOUBT.
BUT UNLESS YOU'RE INTO THE GUYS, THEY MIGHT AS WELL BE DOGS, RIGHT?

DO I HAVE A... BOY-FRIEND?
UM... WHY DO YOU ASK?
JUST CURIOUS, THAT'S ALL.
吸血遊戯
南領無
Act.8

IS SHE STILL IN LOVE WITH HIM?
SO...
...WHAT ABOUT YOU?
ANYONE SPECIAL IN YOUR LIFE?
AND IF SO, DOES HE HAVE A NAME?
M-M-ME?!
WHAT?!

THESE POTION PILLS ARE ALL YOU'LL NEED TO DESTROY PRINCESS ISHTAR

YOU WANT ME TO POISON HER...?
PILLS?


TOO EASY. THE RED PILL TAKES AWAY A PERSON'S SIGHT...
THE BLUE ONE, THEIR ABILITY TO WALK...
...AND THE BLACK ONE, WELL, LET'S JUST SAY THAT ONE PUTS THEM TO SLEEP FOR A VERY LONG TIME.

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Act.8

That's kinda the same thing.
WELL, UM, LET'S SEE...
DUZIE IS CERTAINLY UP THERE.
WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS, WHO'S THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON IN YOUR LIFE? WHO CAN'T YOU IMAGINE LIVING WITHOUT?
DUZIE?
A CAT AND AN OLD MAN?
THAT'S IT?!
YEAH, HE'S MY PET KYAWL.
AND THE OLD FART, KELD. AT LEAST SOMETIMES.
.....!
THINK ABOUT WHICH ONES...
...WILL CAUSE THE MOST SUFFERING TO OUR DEAR PRINCESS.
SO, GIVE SOME THOUGHT TO WHICH FRIEND OF ISHTAR'S
...YOU WANT TO USE EACH PILL ON.
MAYBE *BOYFRIEND* IS TOO NARROW A TERM.

BODYGUARDS DON'T COUNT...?
YOUR BODY-GUARDS DON'T COUNT.
WELL, THEN...
...FALAN IN CI XENETH, AUNT RAMIA IN LA NAAN...
I guess
...AND HER SONS, OF COURSE! SEILIEZ, LAPHIJI AND VORD.
...THERE'S AUNT SONIA...

ISHTAR!
CI XENETH AND LA NAAN? THAT'S TOO FAR!
Too far for what?

AND...
THERE ARE MY GUARDS, JILL AND KRAI.
AND...

THIS IS VORD?
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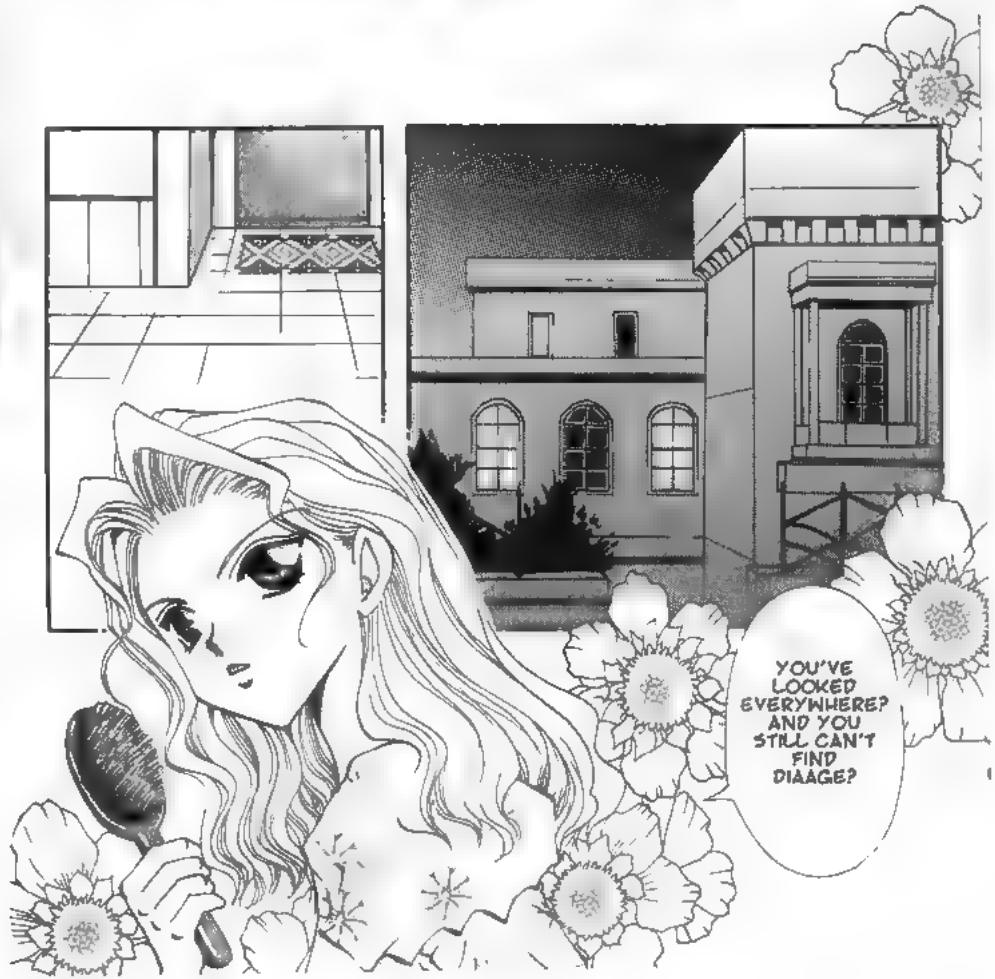
!!
VORD!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!

IT'S LIKE THERE ARE TWO OF YOU OR SOMETHING. YOU HAVE EVEYBODY SEEING DOUBLE.
ガン
!!
FIGURES. SHE WON'T ADMIT IT...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT! DON'T BE SO... UM...SILLY!
PRINCESS ISHTAR...
..YOUR DOCTOR'S HERE TO SEE YOU.
トントン

I WANT TO KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON.
OKAY, ISHTAR...
...THERE'S SOMETHING THAT'S BEEN BOTHERING ME SINCE CI XENETH.
YOU'VE GOT TO COME CLEAN WITH ME NOW. BECAUSE OTHERWISE, I'LL THINK I'M GOING NUTS.
GOING ON? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? THERE'S NOTHING GOING ON!
YES, THERE IS.

NO, MA'AM. SHE'S VANISHED.
DAMN, I WANTED HER ADVICE. NO MATTER, I THINK I HAVE THIS FIGURED OUT. I'LL SAVE THE BLACK PILL AS A GIFT TO ISHTAR, SO SHE CAN "END HER SUFFERING."
BUT WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER TWO?
WELL...
...I GUESS IT WAS GOING TO BE PUT DOWN, BUT THE PRINCESS SAVED IT! AND NOW HER BODYGUARD IS TRAINING IT!
REMEMBER THAT HORSE THAT ALMOST KILLED HER MAJESTY?
VAGUELY.
MI-LADY!
YOU'LL NEVER GUESS WHAT I HEARD TODAY!

ZIE!
YOUR DOCTOR ...?


YOU'VE LOOKED EVERYWHERE? AND YOU STILL CAN'T FIND DIAAGE?

I'LL USE THE BLUE PILL...
...ON THE HORSE!
IF IT CAN'T WALK, THEY'LL HAVE TO PUT IT DOWN!
AND IF ISHTAR THINKS SHE'S RESPONSIBLE...
...IT'LL BE AS IF SHE KILLED IT HERSELF.
SHE SAVED BACK-BREAKER?
WHAT AN IDIOT!
I BET HE'LL BREAK THAT OLD HORSE IN NO TIME. PRINCESS ISHTAR IS A SAINT, MILADY. PEOPLE JUST CAN'T SEEM TO GET ENOUGH OF HER.
BUT WHEN SHE RATTLED OFF HER FAVORITE PEOPLE, THE FIRST NAME ON THE LIST WAS HER CAT.
AND WHAT AN ANIMAL LOVER! RESCUING A HORSE THAT ALMOST THREW HER!
THAT'S IT!

WHAT?!
YOU'RE TELLING ME THAT...
.....
...YOUR KITTY ISN'T A KITTY AT ALL...
...BUT A VAMPIRE, WHO CAN DISGUISE HIMSELF...
...AS YOU?!

SO REALLY, HE'S THE VAMPIRE KING DUZELL!
I'M LOOKING FOR THE REINCARNATION OF PHELIOS, SO I CAN TAKE REVENGE ON HIS SOUL...
...BY KILLING HIS NEW BODY. HE'LL BE REBORN SOMEWHERE DOWN HIS OWN BLOODLINE. GOT IT?

WELL...
...I SUPPOSE THIS DOES MAKE SENSE.
SO, ISHTAR...
...KNOWING THAT DUZELL HERE IS TRYING TO KILL YOUR REINCARNATED GREAT-GRANDFATHER, NOT TO MENTION WHATEVER POOR SCHMUCK HE WINDS UP INHABITING...

IF I'M IN LOVE WITH ISHTAR...
HOLD ON A SECOND!
WELL, YOU LEFT OUT A COUPLE DETAILS, AND DUZIE PREFERS THE WORD "CAT" TO "KITTY," BUT YEAH
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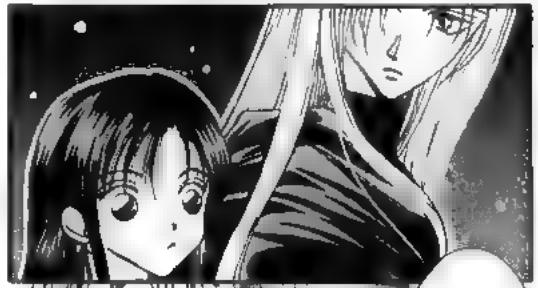
...THEN WHICH ISHTAR AM I IN LOVE WITH?
AND DO I REALLY WANT AN ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION?

THAT APPLIES TO POLITICAL DECISIONS AS WELL AS PERSONAL ONES. PHELIOS MARRIED HIS COUSIN—
...AND LIKE A GOOD LITTLE HEIR, I'M EXPECTED TO MARRY A COUSIN AS WELL.
OF COURSE, NO ONE'S BOTHERED ASKING ME IF THAT'S WHAT I WANT.

...WHY ARE YOU HELPING HIM?



WELL...

...THIS MAY SOUND TERRIBLE ...
...BUT DUZIE ISN'T THE ONLY PERSON WHO'S BEEN WRONGED.
PHELIOS WAS THIS BIG HERO. PEOPLE VIEW EVERY DECISION HE'S MADE AS WORTHY OF EMULATION.

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YOU'LL NEVER WIN LEENE OVER WITH PRESENTS.
YOU WANT TO GIVE HIM TO LEENE, DON'T YOU?
YOU'RE A BRILLIANT TACTICIAN, ASHLEY, BUT YOU'RE A POOR STUDENT OF HUMAN NATURE
.....
.....!

YES.
ALL UNCLAIMED ANIMALS MUST BE TURNED OVER TO THE GENERAL STAFF OFFICE I'M SORRY, BUT THAT'S THE LAW
YOU WANT THIS HORSE?
BUT...
...UNLESS THEY WANT TO LEARN HOW TO FLY.
...THIS HORSE STILL HASN'T BEEN BROKEN. HE TRUSTS ME TO A CERTAIN EXTENT...
...BUT I WOULDN'T RECOMMEND YOU LET ANYONE ELSE MOUNT HIM...

.....!
FAIR ENOUGH?
SINCE NO ONE KNOWS WHERE HE REALLY CAME FROM...
...WE'LL LET HIM PICK HIS NEW MASTER. WHAT DO YOU THINK, YUJINN?
SOUNDS GOOD TO ME.

CONSIDERING THAT YUJINN AND LEENE USED TO BE LOVERS...
HE'S REALLY GOT SOME GUTS TALKING TO ASHLEY LIKE THAT.
LET'S TRY THIS. IF YOU CAN RIDE HIM, ASHLEY, HE'S YOURS.
ARE YOU SAYING ... ...YOU DON'T WANT ASHLEY TO HAVE THE HORSE?
DARRES, YOUR THOUGHTS?

COME BY AND PICK HIM UP TOMORROW. HE'LL BE HERE
VERY WELL.
HMM...
POOR ASHLEY. HE HAS SUCH A HEAVY BURDEN TO BEAR.
OF ALL THE THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN DEMANDED OF HIM...
...THE HARDEST WAS...
WAIT, I WAS THE RUDE ONE?
YOU KNOW, YOU MAY WANT TO BE A BIT MORE COURTEOUS WHEN HE COMES BY TOMORROW.
ASHLEY'S THE SMARTEST MAN IN ZI ALDA.

THAT'S WHY HE GOT UPSET WHEN PRINCESS ISHTAR TRIED TO RIDE HIM HARD.
POOR GUY.
LOOKS LIKE HE THREW A SHOE AND NO ONE BOTHERED REPLACING IT.
HE'S A BIT LAME IN HIS LEFT FORELEG AS A RESULT.
I'VE REPLACED THE SHOE AND HE'S GOTTEN A LITTLE BETTER WITH PEOPLE...
...BUT HE STILL DOESN'T TRUST US.
TELL HIS HANDLERS TO BE EXTRA CAREFUL...
...BECAUSE HE REMEMBERS EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE.
AWW, HELL. IF YOU PROMISE YOU'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF HIM, YOU CAN HAVE HIM.

PHELIOS MARRIED HIS COUSIN, AND LIKE A GOOD LITTLE HEIR, I'M EXPECTED TO MARRY A COUSIN AS WELL.
OF COURSE, NO ONE'S BOTHERED ASKING ME IF THAT'S WHAT I WANT.
RIGHT, FALAN...
...THAT'S WHY I WAS SO GLAD TO SEE VORD! HE SAVED ME FROM LEENE!
THAT GIRL'S WAY TOO FULL OF HERSELF. HER BUBBLE IS JUST SCREAMING TO BE BURST.

.....
WE GREW UP TOGETHER. WENT TO THE SAME SCHOOL...
AND I NEVER GOT THE BEST OF HIM...NOT ONCE! LIKE I SAID, HE'S BRILLIANT.

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Act.9

LEENE? NO, SHE ISN'T.
AND THAT'S WHAT I DON'T GET.

MAYBE SELIEZ COULD DRESS UP IN DRAG AND PARADE AROUND AT HER NEXT PARTY! SHE CAN'T STAND BEING OUTCLASSED BY OTHER GIRLS. I CAN'T IMAGINE HOW SHE'D RESPOND TO BEING SHOWN UP...
-BY A GUY IN DRAG.
ハハハ...

SHE'S CUTE AND ALL, BUT NO ONE WOULD SAY SHE'S BEAUTIFUL!

.....
I HEARD THAT NO ONE ELSE WANTED IT.
SO I TOOK IT IN.
YOU REMEMBER THE HORSE THAT TRIED THROWING PRINCESS ISHTAR THE OTHER DAY?
WHAT I REALLY NEED IS A NEW CARRIAGE...
!!

A HORSE...?
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I'D WANT ANOTHER HORSE?
DADDY JUST GAVE ME A NEW GELDING LAST MONTH!
AND YOU SHOULD SEE OUR FEED BILL! THEY DO EAT LIKE HORSES, YOU KNOW!

TOMORROW, I'M GOING TO TAKE HIM ON A LONG RIDE, FIRST THING!
IT'S ALL STARTING TO COME TOGETHER.
ISHTAR, YOUR ROYAL ASS IS MINE...
LEENE...
...THERE'S ONE THING I WANT YOU TO PROMISE ME.

OH, THAT HORSE!
IF YOU WANTED HIM, I WAS GOING TO LET YOU HAVE HIM. BUT SINCE YOU DON'T--
YES! YES! YES! OF COURSE I WANT HIM! YOU'VE MADE ME SO HAPPY, DEAR!
!

I KNOW.
DO I HAVE TO REMIND YOU...
...THAT LEENE TRIED TO USE THAT HORSE TO KILL ISHTAR?
BUT I ALSO KNOW...
...THAT EVEN IF I UNDERSTOOD EVERYTHING IN THIS WORLD...
...LEENE WOULD STILL BE A MYSTERY TO ME.

WHAT?
LOOK AT YOU YOU'RE MISERABLE.

I DON'T UNDER-STAND YOU AT ALL.

EVEN IF THEY'RE THE WRONG ONES.
IS THAT SO?
THAT'S THE ATTRACTION, I'M SURE.
NO. SHE'S NOT SOME PUZZLE I'M TRYING TO SOLVE
.....
.....
SIGH...
I NEVER DO ANYTHING WITHOUT FIRST DISSECTING THE PROBLEM AND WEIGHING ALL THE PROS AND CONS AND EVEN THEN, I'M ALWAYS SECOND-GUESSING MYSELF.
LEENE, ON THE OTHER HAND, ACTS QUICKLY, MAKING HER DECISIONS BASED ON HOW SHE FEELS.
AND SHE STANDS BY THOSE DECISIONS.

I KNOW HE HAS OTHER LOVERS! THAT DOESN'T MATTER!
HE CAN MARRY PRINCESS ISHTAR, FOR ALL I CARE! I'LL STILL LOVE HIM! AND ONLY HIM!
YOU WANT TO GO RIDING AGAIN?
YEAH!

YOU'RE FROM A GOOD HOUSE.
BOTH OF OUR PARENTS WOULD BE THRILLED IF WE WOUND UP TOGETHER.
IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T LIKE YOU, ASHLEY...
...BUT WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER FOREVER.
BUT...
...I LOVE YUUJEL!
I ALWAYS HAVE, AND I ALWAYS WILL!!

REMEMBER THAT HORSE YOU RODE THE OTHER DAY?
WELL, ASHLEY GAVE HIM TO ME!
THAT HORSE? LEENE, HE'LL KILL YOU!
NO, HE WON'T.
THEY WERE GOING TO PUT BACKBRE-- I MEAN, THAT HORSE, DOWN AFTER HE TRIED TO THROW YOU
BUT DARRES STOPPED THEM.
..HE'S BEEN TRAINING HIM. I HEAR HE'S BEEN BROKEN IN BEAUTIFULLY. HE'S EATING OUT OF DARRES' HAND AND EVERY-THING!
AND...
PUT DOWN?
EATING OUT OF HIS HAND?
.....!!
WOW!
SO HE'S COM-PLETELY TAME NOW? THAT'S GREAT!
Bashed
HE SURE IS!
IF HE WASN'T, THEN I WOULDN'T BE RIDING HIM TOMORROW, WOULD I?
HOW COOL! WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO CALL HIM?

LOOKING FORWARD TO IT.
OF COURSE!
WELL, THEN, YOU COME UP WITH A NAME.
...AND I'LL SEE YOU TOMORROW!
スタ スタ スタ
ポン
I REALIZE LADY LEENE LIKES BEING IN THE SADDLE, BUT SHE'S NEVER STRUCK ME AS THE RIDING TYPE
YUP.
くるん
A NAME?
I, UH...I HAVEN'T THOUGHT OF ONE YET.
NO?
LET'S SEE...
HOW ABOUT PHELIOS?
THEN CAN I NAME HIM?
NO, THAT'D BE TOO WEIRD. I COULD NEVER SPUR A PHELIOS
WELL, THEN... WHAT ABOUT DUZELL?
C'MON! I DON'T WANT TO JINX HIM!
WHY WOULD I NAME HIM AFTER A VAMPIRE KING?
LOOK, HE'S MY HORSE, OKAY? I'M GONNA NAME HIM!

WHAT THE HELL'S THE MATTER WITH ME?
WHY DO I FEEL LIKE I'M BEING PULLED APART FROM THE INSIDE?
...IS REALLY TWO ACTORS, PLAYING ONE PART?
IS IT BECAUSE THE ISHTAR I LOVE...

THANK YOU.
パタン

AREN'T YOU PRINCE VORD OF LA NAAN?
I WONDER...
.....?!
OUR MISTRESS, LADY SONIA, WOULD LIKE TO GREET YOU.

OR IS IT THAT THE REAL ISHTAR...
...IS ONLY IN LOVE WITH DARRES?
IT FEELS LIKE I'VE LOST A PART OF ME.
Will I ever be able to love anyone else?

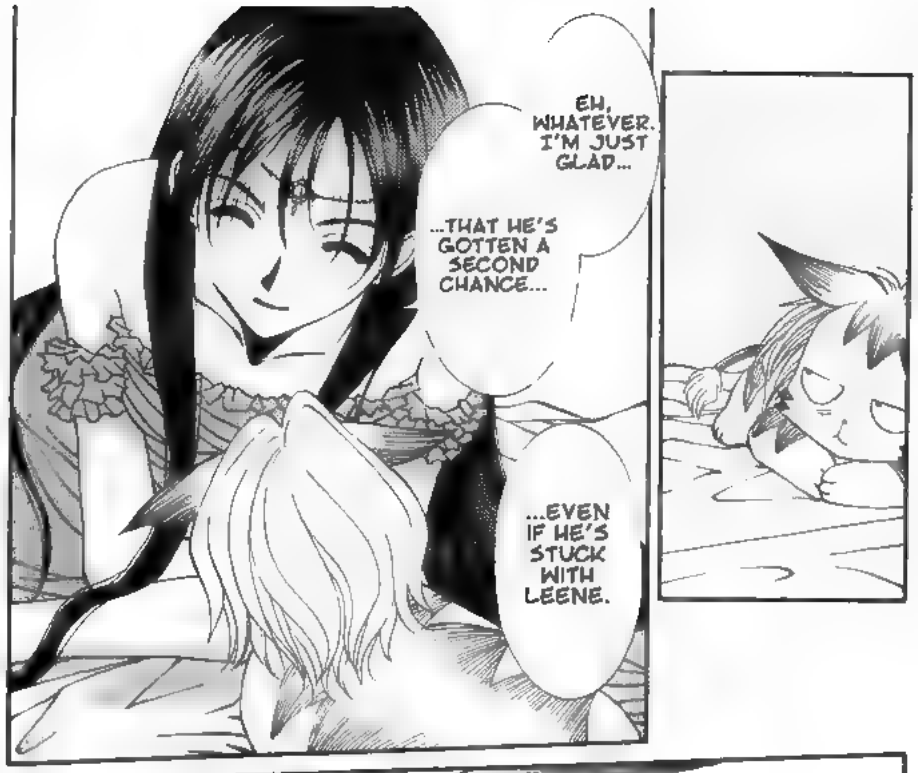
A NAME FOR YOUR HORSE?
ISHTAR, I THINK WE SHOULD START SEEING OTHER PEOPLE. WELL, I SHOULD, AT ANY RATE...
...ASHLEY MAY HAVE MORE PRESSING NEEDS THAN NAMING YOUR NEW PET
LADY LEENE...
...I'M SURE EVEN YOU CAN UNDERSTAND THAT AS A GENERAL AND MINISTER OF MILITARY STRATEGY...
DA-AMN!
WAITER! TWO SAUCERS OF MILK, PLEASE!
LUCY!
WHERE'S ASHLEY? I'VE BEEN LOOKING ALL OVER FOR HIM!
I HAVE TO TALK TO HIM! RIGHT NOW!
ON SECOND THOUGHT, WHY PUT ALL MY EGGS IN ONE BASKET?
.....
I NEED HIM TO HELP ME NAME MY HORSE!

HAVE I REALLY CHANGED THAT MUCH?

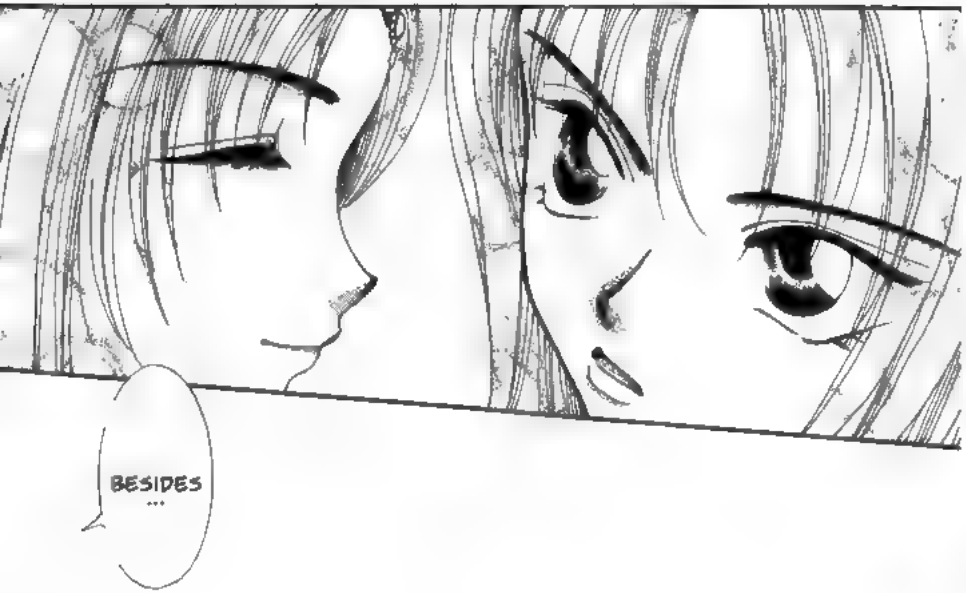
I'LL ASK MY HUSBAND FOR ANYTHING I WANT, WHENEVER I WANT!
IF I TELL ASHLEY TO KISS AN IGUANA'S ASS HE'D BETTER BE IN THE DESERT PUCKERING UP BEFORE THE LAST WORD IS OUT OF MY MOUTH!
!!
バイ
バイ

IT'S NOT A MATTER OF "WHAT," BUT "WHO"...
SO, MR. MYSTERY HORSE...
...IS LEENE'S NOW. HOW FUNNY!
I WONDER WHICH ONE OF THEM IS MORE DANGEROUS. WHAT DO YOU THINK, DUZIE?

WHAT HAPPENED?
HOW DI BECOME SUCH A PUSHOVER?
THE DUZELL OF LEGEND HAD NEITHER FRIENDS NOR MERCY! ONLY PUPPETS AND RUTHLESS AMBITION!
IF YOU REALLY ARE DUZELL ...
...THEN WHAT TURNED YOU INTO SUCH A SOFT-HEARTED SAP?


EH, WHATEVER. I'M JUST GLAD...
...THAT HE'S GOTTEN A SECOND CHANCE...
...EVEN IF HE'S STUCK WITH LEENE.

ALTHOUGH YOUR HUMANITARIAN STREAK DOES HAVE ITS UPSIDES...
YOU'RE A FOOL, ISHTAR.
YEAH, BUT I'M STILL IN ONE PIECE!
It'll take more than a grumpy ol' horsey to do ME in!
THAT HORSE SHOULD HAVE BEEN PUT DOWN. IF HE'D THROWN YOU, YOU COULD HAVE BEEN KILLED.


BESIDES ...

AND MY BODY-GUARDS ...
...MY SOLDIERS ...
AND HE'S NOT THE ONLY ONE.
THERE HAVE BEEN OVER A HUNDRED SEPARATE ATTEMPTS MADE ON MY LIFE.
...EVEN MY MAID, THEY'VE GIVEN THEIR LIVES TO PROTECT ME. ME!
THEY WERE DOING THEIR JOBS, ISHTAR. YOU CAN'T BLAME YOURSELF!

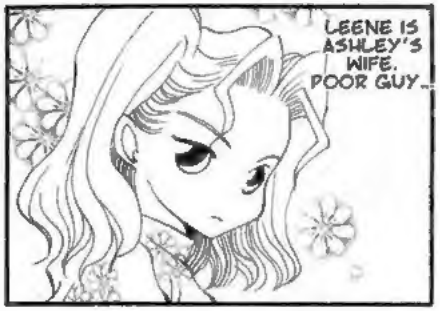
.....!!
I TOLD YOU ABOUT MY FOOD TASTER.
HE DIED PROTECTING ME.
...I...
...DON'T WANT ANY-ONE ELSE TO SUFFER FOR MY SAKE. I'VE CAUSED ENOUGH SORROW.

YOU'RE RIGHT.
THANK YOU.
EVERY NOW AND THEN, I NEED A LITTLE REMINDER
ALL THE SACRIFICES THAT ARE MADE IN MY NAME
IT'S THE HARDEST THING ABOUT BEING A PRINCESS.

I JUST DON'T WANT TO LET EVERYONE DOWN.
.....!!
GOD, LISTEN TO ME. YOU'RE RIGHT, PERHAPS I AM A FOOL.

TO BE CONTINUED IN VOLUME 8

Lady Leene



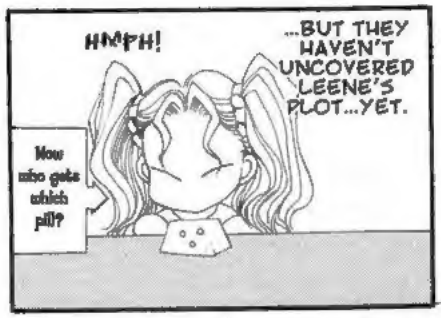
Making bitchiness look GOOD!
THIS IS WHAT HIS HEADSHOT LOOKS LIKE:
NOT REALLY A FAN FAVORITE!
You know what they say, bad girls have more fun!

LOOK!
HEY, GUYS! PLEASE READ CARBUNCLE! IT'S WAY BETTER THAN THIS BOOK!
WHO CARES ABOUT VAMPIRE GAME ANYWAYS?
BUT THE REAL REASON I PUT HER IN THIS STORY WAS TO...
A very special guest!

Editor's note: *Carbuncle* is another popular manga series by Judal.

Yujinn / Yuujel

Hey There!



Not Your Average Afterword

VAMPIRE GAME

Next issue...

Leene literally picks her poison. With three different poisons to choose from, Leene is armed to avenge the woman she believes is responsible for stealing Yuujel's heart. The first of the three toxic pills causes blindness, the second makes the victim go lame, and the third brings about an untimely death. Yet despite all evidence to the contrary, Leene does have a conscience. Dealing in death is not her forte, and the fact that she's beginning to like Princess Ishtar certainly doesn't help.

Meanwhile, the rest of our crew must decide what to do if she does go through with her plan. And while the issue may be clear-cut to Darres, Yuujel and Lucy, it's not to Ashley. Leene is his wife, after all. Ashley has sworn an oath to defend Zi Alda and by extension, Phalosta, but how can he possibly choose between the woman he loves and the country he's sworn to protect?

Postscript

This is Mr. T's Post Pet.
Uchimura-kun
He's so cute!
HER NAME IS UCHIMURA. YOU SHOULD SEND HER A LETTER RIGHT NOW!
SO, I GOT A "POST PET" THE OTHER DAY.

BEATS ME.
I JUST WANT A STUPID POST PET! WHAT DO I NEED A CREDIT CARD FOR?
So what do I put down here?
BUT TO MAIL HIM, MY PROVIDER SAID I NEEDED TO APPLY FOR A CREDIT CARD!

Carbuncle

And don't even get me going on the pet pictures!
Wasn't this section even longer last time? She kept going on and on about moving and PlayStations and stuff.
BELIEVE IT OR NOT, VAMPIRE GAME ISN'T THE ONLY MANGA I WRITE.

Carbuncle
I'VE BEEN WORKING ON A COMIC CALLED...
AND YOU SHOULD ALL GO OUT AND BUY IT IMMEDIATELY! PICK UP SOME COPIES FOR YOUR FRIENDS TOO!

Vampire Game is really good too! Calm down, Dusie!
IT'S A FANTASY SERIES LIKE VAMPIRE GAME AND IT'S REALLY GOOD! HONEST!
ONLY PROBLEM IS THAT IT'S NOT YET AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH! SORRY. YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO LEARN JAPANESE, RIGHT?

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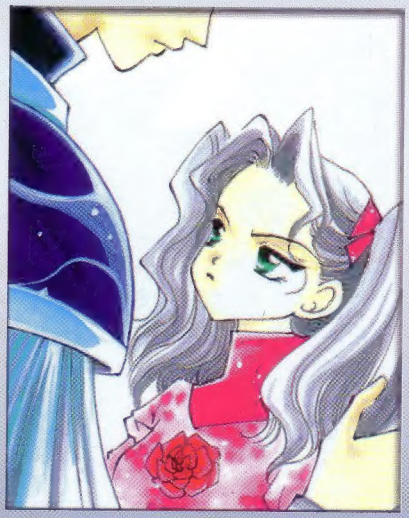
VAMPIRE GAME™

When the news of Prince Yuujel's return reaches everyone in Zi Alda, all hell breaks loose, leaving Ishtar, Duzell and Darres speechless. Lady Leene's resentment becomes more apparent–although married to Captain Ashley, she still holds a flame for the prince. As her fury grows, so does the plot to destroy Ishtar and all those close to her!



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